



Garrison leadership changes hands

By YVONNE JOHNSON  
APG News

A new era began at Aberdeen Proving Ground June 19 when Col. Orlando W. Ortiz transferred command of APG Garrison to Col. Gregory R. McClinton during a change of command ceremony at the post theater.

McClinton comes to APG from Norfolk, Va., where he served as the chief of staff for the Joint Staff Deputy Directorate for Joint Force Coordination (J31).

Ortiz moves on to become director of Intelligence for the NATO mission in Afghanistan.

Davis D. Tindoll Jr., director, Atlantic Region, U.S. Army Installation Management Command, presided over the ceremony, passing the garrison colors from Ortiz to McClinton, symbolizing the transition of responsibility.

The ceremony was dedicated to the more than 1,200 Soldiers, civilians and contractors of the APG U.S. Army Garrison, according to Janet Dettwiler, the ceremony emcee and director of Human Resources.

Garrison APG directorates work together to support the 90 garrison-supported organization missions which include extensive research, development and engineering, communications, chemical and biological defense, public



Photo by Sean Kief

(From left) Outgoing APG Garrison commander, Col. Orlando W. Ortiz; Davis D. Tindoll Jr., director of the Atlantic Region, Installation Management Command; and incoming APG Garrison commander Col. Gregory R. McClinton stand at attention after the passing of the colors during the garrison change of command ceremony at the post theater June 19.

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Volunteers build Wounded Warrior home

By YVONNE JOHNSON  
APG News

With all the fanfare of a small town parade, Homes for Our Troops put on a red, white and blue three-day build brigade in Havre de Grace for local Wounded Warrior Kelly Keck June 15.

Fire trucks and motorcycles escorted volunteers to the site on Old Level Road where a

one-story home is being built from the ground up. More than 200 volunteers were on hand for Day 1 of the event.

APG Soldiers and civilians volunteered to work during the three-day event to frame, side and roof the house and install windows and doors. Volunteers included personnel from the U.S. Army Public Health Command and U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command.

Hundreds of community members participated in the three-day event. Volunteers still are needed for the project which aims to conclude within 90 to 120 days.

Keck is an ATEC civilian. He lost his right leg and sustained severe nerve damage to his right hand from an anti-personnel mine while serving in Afghanistan.

Garrison's APG's Fred Posadas, DPTMS, led the color guard of USAPHC personnel during the opening ceremony.

Master Sgt. Shelia Sango of ATEC led the Day 1 group of

volunteers. She said about 50 volunteers from ATEC organizations would pitch in to help out over the three days, includ-

See HOMES, page 8



Photo by Rachel Ponder

CDC celebrates the Army's Birthday

Capt. Christian Marks, U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, reads "Happy Birthday Army" to children in the Aberdeen Child Development Center June 14. Afterwards the class sang the Star Spangled Banner and America the Beautiful. The celebration concluded with Marks cutting an American flag shaped birthday cake.

Olympic Sports Day set July 26



Staff report

Team APG is hosting a post-wide organization day, dubbed Olympic Sports Day, July 26, at various locations across the installation.

The event is open to all Aberdeen Proving Ground employees.

"This first-of-its kind event

is designed to foster team building within the organizations and across the installation, improve organizational morale and camaraderie, and promote fitness and healthy competition," said Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis J. Dent, Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command.

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APG celebrates Signal Corps anniversary

By BOB DIMICHELE  
CECOM Public Affairs

More than 200 Soldiers, Family members, civilian employees, retirees and industry representatives turned out for the celebration of the Signal Corps' 152nd birthday celebration here June 13.

Hosted by the Aberdeen chapters of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association and the Signal Corps Regimental Association at Top of the Bay, the event focused on tradition and partnering.

Maj. Gen. Robert S. Ferrell, commanding general of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command, took the opportunity of the Signal Corps' 152st anniversary to highlight the significance that the Signal Corps has

played in the past and the vital role it plays in meeting the challenges of the modern battlefield. He took time to recognize the Army's 237th birthday.

"So today join me in celebrating the 237th anniversary of our Army as well as the 152nd anniversary of our Signal Corps," Ferrell said. "We celebrate the strength of our Soldiers, civilians, contractors, Families, and communities. Together we are the strength of the nation."

The Signal Corps traces its existence from June 21, 1860, when Congress authorized the appointment of one signal officer in the Army, and a War Department order carried the

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WEATHER  
Thurs.



98° | 77°

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ICE system  
http://ice.disa.mil/  
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Fond Farewell

Darabasz retires after 45 years of police and federal service.



League play

League of Dreams celebrates end of regular season.

ONLINE

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MORE INSIDE

APG celebrates Army Birthday PAGE 11  
Challenge Academy graduates 99 students PAGE 11



STREET TALK

What did you enjoy most about the Army Birthday festivities?

I liked the way the whole day came together starting with the run this morning with our Soldiers and their camaraderie with our civilians. I also liked seeing the young recruits and the uniform pageant.



**Capt. Desmond Gittens**  
U.S Army Test and Evaluation Command

I liked seeing my husband (Spc. David Reese from the 22nd Chemical Battalion) participate in the uniform pageant. I try to learn as much as I can about the military from my husband and by attending military events whenever possible. I am a stay-at-home mom, so these events allow me to meet others in the military community. It is a good feeling to see everyone come together to support the military.



**Breeyn Reese**  
Military spouse

I think this event bridges the gap between the Army's past and future. I think these events are important because they teach children about the history of the Army and military traditions. These children might someday serve in our Army and carry on these traditions.



**Timothy Knox**  
APG Alcohol and Drug Control Officer

The Army Birthday celebrates the lineage and customs of the Army. It also emphasizes how critical the Army is in defense of the nation. I liked seeing the entire APG community - Soldiers, Family members, retirees, civilians and Freestate Challenge Academy cadets come together to celebrate this event. We depend on each other for success.



**Brig. Gen. Leslie Smith**  
Commander of the 20th Support Command (CBRNE)

OPINION

My Not-so-fun Fourth

What's not to love about the Fourth of July?

Barbecues, staying up late and watching all the magnificent fireworks were annual traditions when I was growing up. One afternoon, my friends and I decided to start the festivities a little early and headed to a local fireworks stand. We looked in awe at all the wonderful Chinese-made packages of fun and picked out our favorites.

My friend, Eric, chose bottle rockets, while another friend grabbed some firecrackers. I picked out some Roman candles. In those days, you could buy anything you wanted as long as you told the fireworks stand owner it was for your father.

With our purchases in hand, we happily rode our bikes back to Eric's house because he had a huge backyard and his parents were never home. After all, who wants parents around when you're doing things you're not supposed to do?

Eric went searching inside his house for something we could blow up and returned with several of his brother's model cars. After loading the cars with fireworks, we spent the next hour destroying them. Yes, we did this without parental supervision, proper personal protective equipment or regard to our safety.

Once the cars were satisfactorily dismantled, it was time for the bottle rockets. We started off by launching them out of an old Pepsi bottle. At first, we'd light them, step away and watch them explode in the air. After a while, however, we decided it would be more fun to hold the Pepsi bottle so we could shoot them at various things in the yard. While this was fun, it was not very smart or safe.

Once the bottle rockets ran out, it



Courtesy photo

To help celebrate a safe Fourth of July, visit <http://www.fireworksafety.com/home.htm> for tips from the National Council on Fireworks Safety.

We decided to ignore the warning and hold the Roman candles anyway. It started wonderfully. Suddenly I heard a weird pop and saw a cloud of smoke. Then I felt a searing pain in my right hand. The candle had exploded in my hand! All I could think of was the warning label and how it was right.

was time for the big finale -- Roman candles! For those who aren't familiar with Roman candles, they are long, narrow cardboard tubes that shoot fire-

balls. As I held one of the Roman candles, I noticed a warning on the side that stated, "Do Not Hold in Hand." "Really," I thought. "How can we enjoy the fireballs if we don't hold them?"

Throwing caution to the wind, we decided to ignore the warning and hold the Roman candles anyway. It started wonderfully -- colored balls of fire shooting everywhere. Suddenly, as I pointed mine at a tree, I heard a weird pop and saw a cloud of smoke. Then I felt a searing pain in my right hand. The candle had exploded in my hand! All I could think of was the warning label and how it was right.

I nervously looked at my hand to survey the damage. There was a blister the size of a silver dollar swelling up, and I was now in horrible pain. Luckily, that was the extent of the damage. My fingers were intact and I wasn't bleeding. However, my parents did ground me for two weeks when I told them what happened. Take my advice and heed the warning labels on fireworks. They're there for a reason.

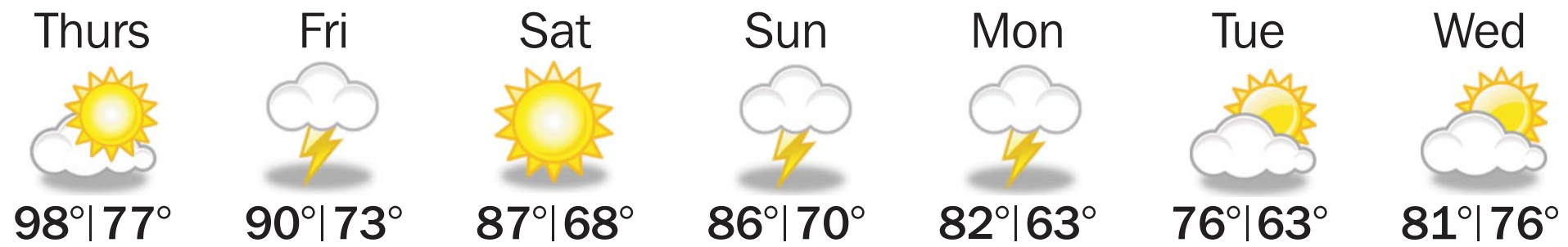
**(Ret.) Gunnery Sgt. Jeff Carlson**

U.S. Marine Corps, Lafayette, Ind.

To help you celebrate safely this Fourth of July, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and National Council on Fireworks Safety offer the following safety tips:

- Always read and follow label directions.
- Have an adult present.
- Buy from reliable sellers.
- Use outdoors only.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never re-light a "dud" firework (wait 15 to 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- If necessary, store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trashcan.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Stay away from illegal explosives.

APG SEVEN DAY FORECAST



APG NEWS

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# Ramp closure set for June 28

*Staff report*

Motorists should begin seeing variable messages boards (like the one above) posted along Route 40 near the ramp outside of Aberdeen Proving Ground’s Route 715 gate.

The signs will announce the June 28 ramp closure and ultimately provide instructions to help motorists navigate the construction area. In preparation for the ramp closure, DPW will open the Aberdeen gate for inbound traffic on Monday – Friday from 5:30 to 9 a.m.

The long awaited construction will be one part of an \$18 million project that

will improve area roads and help accommodate additional traffic generated by Base Realignment and Closure-related growth. The state funded construction is expected to take place over the next year, and motorists are advised to take steps now to help minimize congestion and travel delays.

For a complete list of steps, visit the APG Homepage [www.apg.army.mil](http://www.apg.army.mil) and click on the ramp closure article in the Featured News box. Or visit the State Highway Administration website for general information on area construction and traffic: [www.roads.maryland.gov](http://www.roads.maryland.gov).



# League of Dreams ends its third season with Churchville game

Story and photo by  
**YVONNE JOHNSON**  
*APG News*

Children in the League of Dreams baseball played their final game of the season at the Churchville Recreation Center June 16.

After practice sessions the teams played a full game with parents and volunteers helping out.

Led by founder and former Major League Baseball player Frank Kolarek, the league provides children, regardless of physical or mental capacity, the opportunity to experience the joy, challenges and personal growth from playing baseball and softball.

The APG group, which began three years ago under the direction of former Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Rodney Rhoades, has grown significantly, from just over a dozen players to 40, according to Kolarek.

He thanked former Garrison Commander Col. Orlando Ortiz for support of the program and interim Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Master. Sgt. John Cavaliere for “stepping in and not missing a beat.”

“APG support has just been incredible,” said Kolarek.

Added support came from Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Director Mike Lupacchino; Child, Youth and School Services’ Youth Sports Director Bill Kegley; Nancy Goucher of the Army Community Service Exceptional Family Member Program; and volunteers from Picerne Military Housing, which also provided volunteers and financial support for the second year.

The season concludes with an All Star game at Ripken Stadium Aug. 16.

“We’ve built a model clearly that works,” Kolarek said.

Parents and volunteers, many of whom have been with the program since it started at APG, agreed.

Daniel Quinn said his 14-year-old son Daniel is very enthusiastic about the program, adding that he won three medals during the Special Olympics of Maryland summer games earlier in the month.

“He really looks forward to playing. He enjoys basketball and other sports too



**Julianna Lupacchino, 12, works her way home from third base during the final game of the League of Dreams 2012 season at the Churchville Recreation Center June 16. A member of the leagues since it began on APG three years ago, Julianna said her favorite part of the game is hitting.**

and he just loves to run,” Quinn said.

Jay Amin and Bruce Pugh of Picerne said they were helping out on their free weekend.

“I enjoyed it enough to come back this year,” Amin said about working with the children. “It’s always fun and worth the effort.”

“The best part is to see the kids smile,” Pugh added.

Georgette Mauler and husband Joe “Pop-Pop” Mauler said their grandson Kyle, 8, was in his second year with the league.

“This is so great. He loves it,” Georgette said. “It’s amazing what they do for these kids. Some of them can barely walk.”

“When you see stuff like this happen-

ing it really gives you hope,” Joe added.

Paul and Terry Contrino of Bel Air gave the program their stamp of approval as well for their son Michael, 11, the youngest of their five children.

“It’s amazing how excited he gets about coming here,” Paul Contrino said. “There’s an interaction you don’t necessarily get with other programs.”

Kelly Lupacchino said that along with she and her husband, the program has had a great effect on her son Nick, 17, who volunteers with their daughter, Julianna, 12.

“He’s always looked out for her and he makes a point to treat her normal,” she said.

“I just like seeing kids live their life better,” Nick added.

Kolarek offered a special thanks to retired Col. Charles Woodbury, the person who first brought the League of Dreams idea to Rhoades.

“I just thought it was a good program for the military to support,” said Woodbury, a member of Kolarek’s church who was in attendance for the final game.

“I was almost in tears today. I counted 75 people out here today. When we started, I thought we’d be lucky to have a dozen.

“On a personal level, seeing the fruits of my blind effort and to see it so successful on a beautiful day in June just means a lot. I knew there had to be something I could do to give back.”

View and download photos at [www.flickr.com/photos/usagapg](http://www.flickr.com/photos/usagapg).



Want to make a difference in how services are rendered at APG? Tell us how we are doing.

Visit <http://ice.disa.mil>. Click on “ARMY” then “Aberdeen Proving Ground.”



# Sleep keeps you, your unit Army Strong

By **KIRA M. KOON**  
*U.S. Army Public Health Command*

Sleep is often thought of as a luxury that falls by the wayside when we are busy and stressed. However, getting enough sleep is one of the most important things you can do to be Army Strong. Sleep is a necessity to sustain your performance—just like food, water and air.

The effects of sleep deprivation can sneak up on you and cause a serious decrease in your ability to stay sharp during training, while on duty and on the battlefield. Some common consequences of sleep deprivation include decreased performance and concentration, increased stress, slow reaction times, confusion, memory lapses and poor judgment. Inadequate sleep is also linked with increased risk of motor vehicle accidents, increased risk of diabetes and heart problems, and increased risk for psychiatric conditions including depression and substance abuse.

In other words, without enough sleep, you put both yourself and your fellow Soldiers at risk.

For optimal performance, most Soldiers need seven to eight hours of sleep every 24 hours, and it is best if this sleep is not interrupted. However, as a Soldier, you might not be able to have seven hours of continuous sleeping time each day. In such cases, shorter sleep periods that add up to between seven and eight hours for each 24-hour period can also sustain alertness and performance.

Getting quality sleep depends on many factors, including your stress levels, the surrounding physical environment and what you eat, drink and do close to bedtime. Sleep experts recommend the following tips:

1. Stick to a sleep schedule. As much as possible, go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
2. Establish a relaxing routine before bed. Give yourself time to unwind. A relaxing routine might include reading or listening to soothing music and lowering the lights.
3. Have a dark, quiet, comfortable and cool sleeping environment. Don't sleep in areas where there is regular activity. If needed, minimize exposure to noise and light by using ear plugs, blackout shades or a sleep mask.

## Healthy Living

[www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/local/](http://www.apg.army.mil/apghome/sites/local/) click on Well Being

Healthy Living is a recurring feature in the APG News. It addresses health topics that matter most to our readers. To view more health topics and the Community Health Promotion Council calendar of events, visit the APG homepage <http://www.apg.army.mil/> and click on the Community Health icon at the bottom right, or scan the QR code (at right) with your smart phone or enabled device. To suggest health-related topics for the Health Living series, email [patricia.g.beauchamp.civ@mail.mil](mailto:patricia.g.beauchamp.civ@mail.mil) or call 410-278-1150.



4. Avoid large meals and beverages right before bedtime. A light snack is OK, but avoid large meals and too many fluids two to three hours prior to bedtime. A large meal can cause indigestion that interferes with sleep. Drinking too many fluids at night can cause you to awaken to urinate.

5. Avoid caffeine and nicotine. Coffee, colas, certain teas and chocolate contain caffeine, and its effects can last for eight hours. Nicotine is also a stimulant and can cause smokers to sleep only very lightly.

6. Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed. While many people think a drink or two will help them fall asleep, alcohol actually prevents you from falling into a deep sleep.

7. Avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep. Some medications, such as heart, blood pressure or asthma medications, and over-the-counter and herbal remedies for coughs, colds or allergies can disrupt sleep patterns. If you are having trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor to see if any medications you are taking might be affecting your sleep.

8. Exercise is great, but not before bed. Avoid exercising within a few hours before going to bed. Exercise makes us more alert and raises body temperature, which makes it harder to fall asleep. So, finish your exercise at least three hours before bedtime.

9. Don't lie in bed awake. If you find yourself still awake after lying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and do something relaxing (like reading or listening to music) until you feel sleepy.

Often the anxiety of not being able to sleep can make it harder to fall asleep.

10. Talk to your doctor if you continue to have trouble sleeping. If you continue to find yourself feeling tired and not alert, talk to your doctor. An underlying health problem might be affecting your sleep.

For more information on how to improve your sleep, refer to:

- Guide to Coping with Deployment and Combat Stress- Sleep Management and Soldier Readiness: A Guide for Leaders and Soldiers. United States Army Public Health Command, <http://phc.amedd.army.mil> (Search for "Sleep")
- Hooah for Health, <http://www.hooah4health.com/mind/sleeptips.htm>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/sleep/healthy\\_sleep.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/sleep/healthy_sleep.pdf)
- National Sleep Foundation, <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## TODAY BLOOD DRIVE SLATED

ECBC, MRICD, and USAPHC are partnering with the Armed Services Blood Program to host their first blood drive of summer at Bldg. E4516 (Chemical Demilitarization Training Facility) on Douglas Road on APG South (Edgewood) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Appointments can be scheduled at [www.militarydonor.com](http://www.militarydonor.com) by using the sponsor code EDGMD. Show your support for our Soldiers and military Families. Most of the blood collected will provide life-saving care for wounded Soldiers overseas. Donors are reminded to bring a photo ID and a list of any travel and medications. Appointments are recommended, but walk-ins are welcome. Drink plenty of fluids all summer long, but especially if you are going to donate. Contact Spc. Matthew Bacon at 410-436-7170 or [matthew.bacon3@us.army.mil](mailto:matthew.bacon3@us.army.mil) for information.

## OPEN MIC & KARAOKE

Do you like to sing? Then Open Mic Thursday at Ruggles Golf Course is the place to show off your talents. Invite your friends and co-workers to join in the fun during Open Mic and Karaoke, hosted by Lou Melo of Melo Time Karaoke, from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Ruggles Golf Course clubhouse. Admission is free with complimentary bar foods, limited snack bar operations and a beer and wine cash bar. Participants must be 18 and older. For more information, call 410-278-3854.

## THURSDAY JUNE 21 EVERYDAY LEADERSHIP FOR TEENS

This free class is from 11 a.m. to noon at CYSS Bldg. 2503. Teens ages 14-18 will learn about the basic qualities and characteristics that make good leaders. Register at CYSS Central Registration Bldg. 2503, rooms 210 or 211. Walk-in registration is 7:30 to 10:30 a.m., or call for an appointment at 410-278-7479/7571. For more information, contact Jay McKinney at 410-278-3250 or e-mail [jay.a.mckinney.naf@mail.mil](mailto:jay.a.mckinney.naf@mail.mil).

## FRIDAY JUNE 22 CONCERT IN THE PARK

Come enjoy golden slippers, show tunes and ragtime in Mumpers struttin’ style while listening to the music of the Gloucester City String Band, 7:30 p.m. in Millard E. Tydings Park in Havre de Grace. Bring lawn chairs and picnic baskets. This event is sponsored by the Havre de Grace Arts Commission. No rain location. For more information, contact the Havre de Grace Arts Commission at 410-939-2100 or e-mail Mary Boehly at [mary-boehly2@verizon.net](mailto:mary-boehly2@verizon.net).

## JOB VERSUS CAREER

A Job Versus Career Class for Teens will be held June 27 from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at ACS Bldg. 2503. Teens will learn the differences and benefits of pursuing a career versus a job. Teens will learn what employers look for, how to apply for a job, resume writing and interview etiquette. Registration is required. For information or to RSVP, call 410-278-9669/7572 or email [marilyn.e.howard.civ@mail.mil](mailto:marilyn.e.howard.civ@mail.mil).

## SATURDAY JUNE 23 GALA TICKETS AVAILABLE AT DOOR

Tickets will be available at the door for the annual Support Our Heroes Gala, set from 6-10 p.m. at the Residence at Bulle Rock, 1200 Bulle Rock Parkway, Havre de Grace, MD 21078. Tickets are \$100; proceeds will benefit the Fisher House Foundation in support of Wounded Warriors and their Families.

Event highlights: cocktail gala, heavy hors d’oeuvre, auctions, musical performances, a USO travelling troupe, and brief program at 8:30 p.m., followed by deejay and dancing.

## WEDNESDAY JUNE 27 CONSTRUCTION MEETING

The Maryland State Highway Administration will hold a public meeting regarding the MD 22 and Paradise Road intersection improvements June 27. The meeting will provide information on the construction project. Display areas will show the anticipated operational and safety improvements, and SHA representatives will be available to answer questions. Visit <http://www.sha.maryland.gov/pages/calendar/details.aspx?eventid=62> for details.

## SATURDAY JUNE 30 ART CONTEST DEADLINE

The submission period for the 2012 Army Arts and Crafts Contest runs through June 30. Contestants can enter their original works of art in categories such as ceramics, drawings, fibers and textiles, glass, metals and jewelry, paintings, mixed media, wood and digital art. Submissions must have been completed within the current contest year, July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012. All authorized Family and MWR patrons are eligible to submit as many as three works per category at the garrison level. Entries submitted as official duty illustrations, training aids, or similar assignments are not eligible. To submit a work of art, complete the entry forms and submit digital images of work online at the contest website: <https://apps.imcom.army.mil/APPTRAC> (must have an AKO email account to access web-based program). For complete contest rules, visit [www.armymwr.com](http://www.armymwr.com).

## THURSDAY JULY 26 OLYMPIC SPORT DAY SET

Team APG is hosting a community-wide Organization Day, dubbed Olympic Sports Day, at various locations on post July 26.

The day is set aside for garrison and tenant organizations to strengthen partnerships and build camaraderie while participating in competitive sports.

Scored events include softball, kickball, volleyball, flag football, 3 on 3 basketball, two-mile race and golf skills. Events will take place at APG North’s Shore Park, multiple softball fields, the recreation center and gym.

Food will be provided, and awards will be presented for each event as well as overall winner.

The event is open to all APG

employees. Although mission will dictate participation, the Olympic Sport Day will be considered the place of duty for Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians. The uniform will be civilian casual for observers and civilian sports for participants.

## FRIDAY JULY 27 WOMEN’S SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

The MarylandTri-County Chapter Federally Employed Women (FEW) presents the 2011 Dottie Dorman Working Women’s Scholarship. The women selected for this honor will receive a \$300 scholarship to pay for or offset college expenses incurred in pursuit of her continuing education. Applications must be received by July 27. For information, contact Melissa Smith at 410-642-2411, ext 5129, or Karen Jobes at 410-436-4429.

## SATURDAY AUG. 11 TICKETS ON SALE NOW

APG MWR and Army Entertainment present Boston with special guests Kansas and Grand Funk Railroad at the Aberdeen Proving Ground Shine Sports Field. Advance tickets are \$30. Tickets can be purchased at [www.apgmwr.com/events.html](http://www.apgmwr.com/events.html), the Leisure Travel Office in the APG North recreation center and the APG South (Edgewood) recreation center. For information, call 410-278-4011 or 410-436-2713.

## SATURDAY AUG. 18 YOLANDA ADAMS CONCERT

APG, in partnership with Ames United Methodist Church will host a gospel concert featuring Grammy and Dove Award-winning artist Yolanda Adams at 3 p.m. at the Post Theater. The concert pays tribute to Wounded Warriors in Maryland. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased at the APG North and South recreation centers. Tickets for active duty Soldiers are \$25 and must be purchased over the counter. To purchase tickets online, visit <https://webtrac.mwr.army.mil/webtrac/apgrectrac.html>. For more information, call the APG Leisure Travel Office at 410-278-4011.

## ONGOING FOOD AND BEVERAGE SURVEY

APG’s Family and MWR needs your help. Please complete the survey to help us understand your food and beverage preferences on the installation. Your feedback is important and will assist us in planning future initiatives. Visit <https://www.research.net/s/APG-Food-Services> to take the survey.

## BLUE STAR MUSEUMS PROGRAM RETURNS

Active duty military personnel and their Families can get free admission to several Virginia museums this summer. The Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond and several others are among 1,600 museums nationwide that are offering free admission to military Families through Labor Day. The Blue Star Museums program is a partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families.

## TUESDAY SEPT. 25 HCC OFFERS ROMETRIP

Experience an arts-centered trip to Rome with Harford Community College January 3-12, 2013. The registration deadline is Sept. 25; instructor permission is necessary prior to registration.

This winter, Creative Photography, History of Furniture and Decorative Arts, Drawing I, II, III, & IV, Sculpture I, II, III, & IV, and Creative Writing are being offered as part of the travel/study experience. The price (including gratuities & tour guides) is \$3,750 per person plus tuition. The first 20 students to register will receive a \$250 discount. Contact Dr. Ellen Avitts at [drellenav@yahoo.com](mailto:drellenav@yahoo.com) or any of the instructors for enrollment application.

## BABES IN WOODS SUMMER CAMP

Eden Mill Nature Center is taking registration for “Babes in the Woods” summer camp for ages 4 and 5. Dates and topics are as follows: July 2- Be A Tree, July 3- Busy Beavers, July 5- Animals Everywhere, July 16- Insect Investigators, July 18- Wonderful Wetlands, Aug. 6- Turtle Time, Aug. 8- Tracks and Trails, Aug. 10- Habitat Hunters from

10 a.m.-1 p.m. Preschoolers will enjoy a day exploring nature through hands-on activities such as hikes, games, stories and crafts. The fee is \$25/member/date or \$30/non-member/date. Pre-registration is required by calling 410-836-3050 or email [edenmillnature-center@gmail.com](mailto:edenmillnature-center@gmail.com). Visit [www.eden-mill.org](http://www.eden-mill.org) for information.

## SEEKING 2ID VETS

The Second (Indianhead) Division Association is searching for anyone who served in the 2nd Infantry Division at any time. For information about the national association and our annual reunion in Reno, Nev., Aug. 23-26, visit [www.2ida.org](http://www.2ida.org) or contact the association’s secretary-treasurer, Bob Haynes, at [2idahq@comcast.net](mailto:2idahq@comcast.net) or (224) 225-1202.

## AUDITION FOR DRACULA

The APG Theater Group will perform Dracula in October. To audition or to join the theater group, visit the recreation center Mondays at 6 p.m., or call 410-278-4011/4907.

## CHAPEL POSITION

The APG main post chapel is seeking someone who can serve as choir director, organist and soloist. It is a paid position, part-time, required for two services on Sunday, special services and rehearsal. If interested, contact Chaplain (Maj.) Jonathan Morse at 410-278-4333.

## MANDATORY MOTORCYCLE TRAINING

Motorcycle safety courses for active duty, Guard and Reserve Soldiers begin this month at APG. To find out the schedule for the basic rider course, experienced rider course and motorcycle refresher training, call Mike Aillen at 410-306-1081. Attendees must register online at <https://apps.imcom.army.mil/airs/>.

## NOW CYSS TEEN SURVEY

APG’s Child Youth and School Services wants to know what activities and programs interest your teens. CYSS offers many classes and sports activities but few teen recreation and leisure programs. We need your help to understand what we can do to meet their needs while providing fun activities. Our ultimate goal is to have enough teen participation to warrant opening a teen center. Visit <https://www.research.net/s/CYSSTeenSurvey> to take the survey. Your responses are very important.

## MSU OFFERS MASTERS IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Morgan State University announces its master’s degree in electrical engineering program, designed for those interested in pursuing an advanced degree with concentrations in communications, signals intelligence and RADAR. The program will be offered at APG and Baltimore City, and includes a thesis or course-only option. An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 and B.S. in electrical engineering from an ABET accredited program are required. Other STEM degrees may be considered. Submit applications by July 1 for the fall semester at: [http://www.morgan.edu/School\\_of\\_Graduate\\_Studies.html](http://www.morgan.edu/School_of_Graduate_Studies.html). Call 443-885-1456 or email [Jumoke.Ladeji-Osias@Morgan.Edu](mailto:Jumoke.Ladeji-Osias@Morgan.Edu) for information.

## DIY WHEEL BALANCE

The APG Auto Craft Center has a new top-of-the-line wheel balancing machine for 10” to 24” wheels, to include low profile tires. Reduce expensive car repair costs and do it yourself with the assistance of Auto Craft staff members. Stop by the center and see how you can save money. For information, call 410-278-5178 or visit [www.apgmwr.com/recreation/auto.html](http://www.apgmwr.com/recreation/auto.html).

## IEPP PROGRAM CONTINUED

Internal Enterprise Placement Program, the IMCOM program designed to place over-hires from one installation in vacancies at another installation, has been continued. APG garrison employees can apply for positions that they qualify for at the same or lower grades. Vacancies are posted at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/662838>.

## Leave Donations

To participate in the Voluntary Leave Program, use forms OPM 630, Application to Become a Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program; OPF 630-A, Request to Donate Annual Leave to Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Pro-

gram (within agency); and OPM 630-B, Request to Donate Annual Leave to Leave Recipient Under the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (outside agency).

For info, contact Cathy Davis at 410-306-0152 or [cathy.a.davis4.civ@mail.mil](mailto:cathy.a.davis4.civ@mail.mil).

## Employees eligible for donations in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

Patricia Adams  
Audrey Alba  
Roberta Brown-Thurman (Fort Huachuca)  
Olivia Burnette  
Kimberly Carns-Lambert  
Mejia Creola  
Adrienne Crelin  
Timothy Compton  
Gregory Czechowicz,  
Stephen Debellis

Meg Downey  
Karean Edwards  
Melissa Edwards  
John Eppinger  
Melanie Espich  
Paula Friedman  
Danielle Hall  
Shawn Heinlein  
Sarah Ingram  
Evelyn Johnson  
Mark Johnson  
Carolyn Moore  
Robert Merritt

Theresa Padron  
Stephanie Parrett  
Mary Pettitway  
Panida Rimchala  
Pedro Rodriguez  
Deborah Smith  
Robynn Squires  
Samuel Tims  
Kimber Todd



**MORE ONLINE**  
More events can be seen at [www.apgnews.apg.army.mil/calendar](http://www.apgnews.apg.army.mil/calendar).



# Signal celebrates 152 years of service

Continued from Page 1

following assignment: “Signal Department--Assistant Surgeon Albert J. Myer to be Signal Officer, with the rank of Major, June 27, 1860, to fill an original vacancy.”

Albert James Myer, an Army doctor, developed the idea of a separate, trained professional military signal service. He proposed that the Army use his visual communications system called “wigwag” while serving as a medical officer in Texas in 1856. When the Army adopted his system June 21, 1860, the Signal Corps was born with Myer as the first and only Signal officer.

Using flags for daytime signaling and a torch at night, wigwag was first tested in combat in June 1861 to direct the fire of a harbor battery against the Confederate positions opposite Fort Monroe, Va.

“For the past 152 years our Signal Corps has been ever watchful for the country,” Ferrell emphasized. The regiment’s motto, “Prot Patria Vigilans,” means “Watchful for the Country.”

Ferrell said Myer faced a number of challenges while he was trying to incorporate the new technology of wigwag into Army communications.



Photo by Bob DiMichele

(From left) Sgt. Christopher Freeman, of the Public Health Command, youngest Soldier present at the celebration of the Signal Corps’ 152nd Birthday; Lt. Col. (ret.) Ed Carnes, oldest Signal Regiment member present; Maj. Gen. Robert S. Ferrell; and Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent cut the birthday cake for the celebration of the Signal Corps’ 152nd Birthday at the luncheon hosted by the Aberdeen chapters of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association and the Signal Corps Regimental Association at Top of the Bay.

“We face similar challenges today,” he said.

From telegraphs to tactical radios, from radios to radar, from establishing

the National Weather Service to bouncing the first signal off of the moon, the Signal Corps has provided the country with vital services to meet the needs of the nation.

“The craft of our Signal Corps is more complex than ever,” Ferrell explained. He said that communications-electronics systems such as WIN-T, Firefinder and the Distributed Common Ground System-Army have enabled the American Army to dominate the battlefield in the 21st century.

Ferrell said that concepts such as the common operating environment and the joint information environment represent a significant cultural shift ahead for the Signal Corps. The common operating environment will enable industry by identifying the parameters within which Army applications and capabilities are designed and enable insertion of new technologies within specified architectures and standards. The joint information environment will establish a common information technology infrastructure.

Following long-standing tradition, Sgt. Christopher Freeman, a Soldier from the Public Health Command who was a member of the color guard at the celebration, and Lt. Col. (ret.) Ed Carnes, who was the oldest Signal Regiment member present, helped Ferrell and Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent cut the Signal Corps’ birthday cake at Top of the Bay to formally acknowledge the day.

# Ortiz bids farewell to Garrison APG

Continued from Page 1

health and vehicle and weapons testing, Dettwiler said.

“Garrison support extends beyond the installation boundaries,” she added. “The garrison works closely with local government agencies, community groups, emergency services agencies, and the surrounding county school systems in support of the community.”

Tindoll acknowledged the leadership of Maj. Gen. Robert S. Ferrell, commander of APG and the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command, who was unable to attend. He called Ortiz an outstanding leader who ensured APG made tremendous contributions to Army readiness.

Listing Ortiz’s accomplishments, Tindoll credited him with overseeing the base realignment and closure transition that included more than \$1 billion in infrastructure upgrades, the construction of 18 new buildings on the installation, coordinating housing and transportation for incoming personnel, working with the state to improve roadways, and moving thousands of Soldiers and civilians to APG from Fort Lee, Va., and Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Tindoll called Ortiz’s execution of the Enhanced Use Lease, which allows businesses to lease installation property and provide upgrades to the installation at no cost to the government, one of Ortiz’s greatest achievements.

“With his leadership, APG’s Enhanced Use Lease is one of the largest and most successful of its kind,” he said. “Orlando, you have done well and I’m very proud of your success.”

He welcomed McClinton, noting that he has impressive credentials for garri-

To the garrison staff, your efforts are recognized throughout the Army. I expect you to continue to excel.

Davis D. Tindoll Jr.  
Director, Atlantic Region, IMCOM

son command.

“He will bring new energy and excellence to APG,” Tindoll said.

Ortiz said his accomplishments were more a testament to the garrison workforce than to himself. He expressed pride in the organizations headquartered on the installation and said he was grateful and proud to have led the garrison staff through BRAC and the loss and gain of so many military commands.

He thanked his wife, Family members and friends for their support, lastly asking the garrison staff to support and embrace McClinton.

“Thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything that you have done,” he said. “Support this gentleman, support his Family, God bless you all.”

McClinton thanked everyone in attendance, assured Ferrell and Tindoll that he looks forward to serving with and for them, and told local community and business leaders that he looks forward to continuing established relationships.

“To the garrison staff,” he said, “your efforts are recognized throughout the Army. I expect you to continue to excel.”

The APG Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year—Sgts. Olayiwola Kugblenu and Matthew Gansel of

Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic—presented flowers and garrison coins to the Family members of McClinton and Ortiz.

A combined color guard of Directorate of Emergency Services police officers and firefighters posted and retired the colors, led by Colors Sgt. Thomas Demaria.

Garrison Chaplain (Col.) Wayne Boyd presented the invocation and Courtney Payne of the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command’s Army Evaluation Center sang the national anthem.

Guests included Maryland State Senator Nancy Jacobs; representatives of Maryland Senator Ben Cardin and Maryland Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger; Harford County Executive David Craig; Aberdeen Mayor Michael Bennett; and members of the Harford County Council as well as Gold Star Mothers.

APG senior leaders in attendance included Brig. Gen. Leslie Smith, commander, 20th Support Command; Brig. Gen. John Regan, deputy commander, U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command and director of the Army Evaluation Center; Dale Ormond, director, U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command; Brig. Gen. Peter Hinz, assistant adjutant general, Maryland National Guard; Installation Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent, CECOM; and several oth-

er command sergeants major and Senior Executive Service civilians.

**Col. Gregory R. McClinton**

A native of Harrisburg, Pa., McClinton was commissioned as a second lieutenant into the Quartermaster Corps in 1987. His



McClinton

past assignments include 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky.; U.S. Military Training Mission to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; U.S. Army Cadet Command, Savannah, Ga.; Quartermaster Center and School, Fort Lee, Va.; 3rd U.S. Army, Camp Doha, Kuwait; Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, La.; Fort Greely, Alaska; and IMCOM, Alexandria, Va.

His military education includes Quartermaster Officer basic and advanced courses and the Army Command and General Staff College.

McClinton holds a bachelor’s degree in marketing from Towson State University; a master’s in computer resources and information management from Webster University; and a master’s in national research strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University.

McClinton is married to the former Vicky Arnette Saylor. They have two children—Chelsea, a recent graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology, and Gregory Jr., a recent high school graduate.

# Homes for Our Troops lays foundation

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ing ATEC Command Sgt. Maj. Allen G. Fritzsching.

“It’s all about esprit de corps,” Sango said. “We start together, we finish together.”

She said that Keck, who is a civilian, often works out with ATEC Soldiers during morning physical training.

“We have far fewer Soldiers than places like Fort Hood but our civilian together with our military force is formidable,” she said.

Officials onsite included Homes for Troops Executive Director Dawn Teixeira and Sgt. Maj. Robert Gallagher of the Army Wounded Warrior (AW2) Program.

Teixeira said the home is the first in Maryland.

“There are many more around the country,” she said. “Since 2004 we’ve built over 100 homes for post-9-11 Soldiers.”

She added that volunteers still are needed for the project which aims to conclude within 90 to 120 days.

“Plenty of help will be needed for the landscaping open house,” she said. To learn more, or to volunteer, visit [www.homesforourtroops.org/keck](http://www.homesforourtroops.org/keck).

When completed the specially adapted home will be a four bedroom, wheelchair accessible, one level home, about 2,800 square feet of living space; overall 3,500 square feet of maneuverable space.

It will have wider doors and hallways

and feature pull-down shelving in the kitchen, accessible appliances, and two 5 feet by 8 feet bathrooms with therapeutic tubs.

Keck said he and his Family, wife Oksana and daughter Zoya, 6, were overwhelmed by the effort to provide them with a home that will greatly reduce the challenges he now faces getting in and out of his home.

“I definitely love my job and the great support of the good people I’ve worked with since 2008,” he said. “We had looked at other properties but my wife found this one,” he added. “We can’t wait to call it home.”

Volunteers included Keck’s soon-to-be neighbor, Lt. Col. Jeremy Bushyager a Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor at Johns Hopkins University and Jeff Brock, president of the Susquehanna Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America.

“Friends knocking on my door got me involved,” said Bushyager, adding that his two sons also were helping out.

“A lot more are coming out this weekend,” he said.

**Wounded Warrior Kelly Keck helps his daughter Zoya hammer the first nail into their new home as wife Oksana looks on.**

Photo by Yvonne Johnson





# Darabasz retires after 45 years

Story and photo by  
**YVONNE JOHNSON**  
*APG News*

When acting Director of Emergency Services, Joseph J. Darabasz came to APG in March 1997, after 23 years with the Philadelphia, Pa. police department, he had no idea the place would grow on him.

Darabasz retires next week after 15 years with DES.

A native of Philadelphia, Darabasz wasn't even sure where APG was. He knew his parents routinely traveled to the area but he had never visited himself until he took his father to visit the former Ordnance Museum. He said that with the discovery of this quiet place in the country, came the notion to seek out a different environment for his family.

Darabasz entered the Air Force in 1968 as an air traffic controller. He served in Vietnam from 1969 to 1970.

"Da Nang's [Vietnam] airport was busier than Chicago O'Hare International Airport a the time," he said, adding that he joined because he thought it was the right thing to do.

The unpopularity of the war spilled over onto American troops, however, and Darabasz recalled when a beer can was thrown at him while in the Los Angeles airport.

"I left a lot of my comrades over there but I still think it was right," he said.

He stayed in for just over seven years. It was only after leaving the military that he considered entering law enforcement when his father told him the Philadelphia police department was hiring and suggested he take the test.

Darabasz came out high on the list and in September 1976 he entered the police academy. During his career in Philadelphia, he moved up from patrolman to lieutenant detective, serving with the department's mobile crime lab and special victims unit, and processing more than 534 murder investigations throughout the city during his career.

He said that while looking into openings at APG, he actually wanted a job as a paralegal but while scrolling through the OPM site he clicked on 'police supervisor' instead.

When he took the position in March 1997, the Police Services Division was transitioning from military police (MPs) to a civilian police force and the former Directorate of Law Enforcement and Security (DLES) became DES. With the change, the APG fire department was moved from under the former Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment umbrella into DES along with the Physical Security division. The changes were made to bring everything in line with the Standard Garrison organization under IMCOM, Darabasz said.



**Joseph J. Darabasz, deputy director of Emergency Services retires June 28 after 15 years with the Aberdeen Proving Ground police. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Vietnam and the Philadelphia Police Department, who has served the nation and his communities for 45 years, he now plans to kayak, fish and golf.**

Darabasz moved up steadily to take over deputy director duties after 10 years on the force. In December 2011 he became acting director when former provost marshal and Emergency Services Director Robert Krauer retired.

Under Krauer, Darabasz handled most base realignment and closure-related issues regarding force protection and post security.

He said he had made up his mind to retire after the BRAC completion in 2011.

"I just wanted to see it through. My wife and I decided on December but I couldn't leave the same time [as Krauer]," he said, adding that he never told his former boss his original intentions.

"So, I decided to stick around and give the command time to find another replacement. Plus, my wife told me, 'We are retiring in June,'" he said with a smile.

He said the biggest transition during his tenure was going from military to civilian and the directorate's greatest challenges started the morning of Sept. 11, 2001.

"When we closed the gates it moved from transition to metamorphosis," he said. "Nothing was ever the same again. It was a logistical nightmare. We went to [force protection level] DELTA, we went to 12-hour days, seven days-a-week; we had the 10th Mountain Division, National Guard, reservists and our own Soldiers helping out. Everyone stepped up, though; everyone chipped in.

"Of course with BRAC we welcomed Fort Monmouth and others to APG," he continued. "Through those years we went through some growing pains but it was all for the better. Things have settled down a bit since then and now my only concern is complacency. We let our guard down once and we should never do that again."

He said that with APG's 144 miles of coastline – all of which must be secured – force protection of the installation must be paramount.

"We discuss it every day," he said.

"When you're responsible for the safety and security of the Soldiers, civilians, Family members and visitors who pass through these gates every day, it's something you can't take lightly. We have a responsibility to protect them and we can't afford one mistake."

Darabasz described his early months at APG as "a culture shock."

"The first six months were unbearable because it was too slow," he chuckled. "[In Philly] I supervised 12 detectives and handled 2,400 incidents a month. I was used to people taking numbers and waiting on benches. But, we knew it was time to get our family oriented to a different environment."

"I love Philadelphia. It's the birthplace of our nation. But I didn't know the country," he said.

Today, Darabasz's daughter is a nurse

in Perryville and his son, a former Baltimore city police officer, now is on the DES police force.

"I tried to talk him into going into computer science," he laughed, adding that kinship brings no special treatment. "He's got to stand in line like everyone else," Darabasz said. "We rarely discuss the job; just the grandkids."

He credits his wife Carol, of 37 years, as being his "backbone."

"Thank God I have the support of my wife," he said. "I don't know what I would have done without her. She took care of birthdays, holidays, you name it. And she never asked about the job; she'd just be there for me and the kids."

The police officers, investigators, security personnel, firefighters and emergency medical technicians who make up the DES are the reason Darabasz considers his tenure successful.

"The real heroes are those on the gates, ensuring they allow only the right folks in," he said. "I put 23 years in Philly, met a lot of folks and received 17 commendations for 'neat' police work," but the folks here are what I will remember most. They're probably the best people I've met in my life. They are motivated all the time. They are the real heroes."

He said that one of his favorite past times is kayaking and he plans to do more of it during retirement. He recently took up freshwater fishing and golf and plans to do more of both when not spoiling his seven granddaughters.

"I will spend a lot of time spoiling them, travel a little and maybe even try a part-time job but nothing too serious," he said.

I'm just thankful for the opportunity to work here," he said. "I put my heart and soul into this organization. I loved working for the Army and around Soldiers. It was a great experience and I'm fortunate God always looked down upon me."

"I wipe my brow June 28, thankful that I made it out of here without incident."

Christopher Ferris, from Fort Riley, Kan., assumes the position of DES director June 28.

**I'm just thankful for the opportunity to work here. I put my heart and soul into this organization. I loved working for the Army and around Soldiers. It was a great experience and I'm fortunate God always looked down upon me. I wipe my brow June 28, thankful that I made it out of here without incident.**

# Organizations encouraged to participate

Continued from Page 1

Although mission will dictate participation, the organization day will be considered the place of duty for Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians who are participating in competitive events.

Scored sporting events will include golf skills, softball, volleyball, kickball, flag football, basketball and relay run.

Units and organizations that are slated to participate include:

- Army Test and Evaluation Command
- Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic

- U.S. Army Health Command
- Public Health Command
- 20th Support Command
- Research Development Engineering Command
- Chemical Materials Agency
- Communications-Electronics Command
- The Program Executive Office for Command, Control and Communications-Tactical

- Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense
- Army Materiel Systems Analysis Activity
- Program Executive Office for Intelligence, Electronic Warfare, and Sensors
- Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical Biological Defense
- 22nd Chemical Battalion
- 203rd Military Intelligence Battalion

Food will be available, and awards will be presented for each event as well as an overall winner. The uniform will be civilian casual for observers and civilian sports for participants.

Senior Installation and CECOM Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell, with Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent, will be the guest speakers.

Continue to read the *APG News* for more information, including sign-up points of contact, for the Olympic Sports Day.



# Installation Run kicks off Army Birthday celebration

Story and photos by  
**YVONNE JOHNSON**  
APG News

The Aberdeen Proving Ground 237th Army Birthday celebration began with an early morning run from Fanshaw Field June 14. Soldiers, civilians and Family members ran the 3.2 miles around the installation led by Installation Commander, Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell; Garrison Commander, Col. Orlando Ortiz, and Installation Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent.

The route wound around the installation and then back to Fanshaw Field where runners passed under the giant Garrison flag which was suspended from ladder trucks provided by firefighters from the Directorate of Emergency Services. DES police officers and emergency medical personnel escorted the runners and provided traffic control.

The commander awarded each unit an Army Birthday streamer and then led a birthday cake cutting with the installation's youngest Soldier, civilian and ChalleNGe cadet.

Ferrell said it was a wonderful Army day.

"Ever since June 14, 1775, we have supported and defended the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. You have allowed freedom for all," Ferrell said.

Later that morning, a huge crowd was in attendance on Fanshaw Field for the official festivities. They included music by the U.S. Army Field Band from Fort George G. Meade, a uniform pageant featuring Soldiers in uniforms representing the Army's major conflicts since its creation for the Revolutionary War, and a history of the American Flag with its three designs posted on the field.

Ferrell congratulated the Garrison for "putting its heart and soul" into the preparations, from the morning run to the main event. He noted that Soldiers, a dedicated civilian workforce and loving families are "the foundation of our strength."

"Our spouses, parents, sons and daughters are holding it together on the homefront," he said. "Together, we are the strength of a great nation."

During the ceremony nine military recruits from the Bel Air Recruiting Sta-



**Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell, commander of APG and CECOM, and his flag bearer run alongside the mass formation as it moves down Aberdeen Boulevard during the Army Birthday Installation Run June 14.**

tion received Army Birthday ID tags from Ferrell and Dent who then led a Birthday Cake-cutting, joined by the youngest APG Soldier, ChalleNGe Academy cadet and civilian present, along with APG civilian Susan Nappi and Spc. Cassandra Rousayne, who received certificates of appreciation.

The recruiting station also provided a rock climbing wall along with an Army Humvee which provided music for the runners during the installation run. Guests enjoyed a food tasting courtesy of Morale, Welfare and Recreation after the program.

Other displays included tactical vehicles from the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command's Aberdeen Test Center and a giant slide from the DES Fire and Emergency Services division.



**APG Senior Leader Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell thanks the APG Soldiers who modeled period costumes in the uniform pageant during the Army Birthday Celebration at Fanshaw Field June 14.**

## ChalleNGe Academy graduates 99 students

Story and photo by  
**RACHEL PONDER**  
APG News

Military and community leaders, Family members, cadre and guests gathered to honor the 99 young men and women from Class 38 who successfully completed 22 weeks of rigorous training during the Maryland National Guard's (MDNG) Military Youth Corps Freestate ChalleNGe Academy commencement ceremony at the APG post theater June 16.

Hosted by retired MDNG Col. Richard Knauer, the academy's special projects officer, and retired MDNG Col. Richard "Thunder" Young, the academy's director, the ceremony included the awarding of scholarships and savings bonds from local businesses, educational institutions and community organizations. Cadets received a total of \$156,000 in scholarships and savings bonds during the graduation ceremony and during an award ceremony held at the APG North recreation center June 12.

Special guests in attendance included APG and CECOM Commander, Maj. Gen. Robert Ferrell and CECOM Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis Dent. Award presenters included the Director, Joint Staff for the District of Columbia National Guard Brig. Gen. Kenny Rickett; Assistant Adjutant General for Maryland Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Allyson R. Solomon; and the Director of the Capitol Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Program, Owen Johnson.

Young thanked Col. Orlando Ortiz and the Garrison staff for their continued support of the program. Located on APG, the Freestate ChalleNGe Academy provides a second chance for at-risk youth and high school dropouts to become productive members of society. During the five month, quasi-military residential program, cadets learn self-discipline and leadership skills while they prepare for the General Educational Development Test. The Freestate ChalleNGe Academy is endorsed by the state of Maryland in a cooperative agreement between the MDNG and the National Guard Bureau.

"These are youth who at one point in their lives were headed down the wrong



**(From right) Cadets Jonathan Amparo, Carrieanna Archie and Kevin Argueta from Class 38 cheer for their Families and friends during the Maryland National Guard Freestate ChalleNGe Academy commencement ceremony at the APG post theater June 16.**

path," Ortiz said, "who are now completing something significant, something positive, that will hopefully serve as a stepping stone for complete success for them individually and for our nation."

Ortiz commended the Freestate ChalleNGe Academy staff, mentors, and all who contribute to the success of the program.

"They reinforce a message, and the message to you should be that you matter," he said. "Your success is our nation's success."

Ortiz challenged the cadets to continue achieving their goals. He instructed the cadets to let discipline and integrity factor into all that they do.

"I salute you for taking advantage of this challenge and making it to this point, but remember this is only the beginning," he said.

Solomon also gave words of encouragement to the graduates.

"Life is about choices. By choosing to become part of Freestate ChalleNGe, it meant that you were choosing success,"

Solomon said. "Embrace what you learned here as solid gold for your future."

Class spokespersons, Madelin Rubio-Aragon and Seth Carrington, shared how the academy changed their lives.

Carrington said that after making some bad decisions, he decided that he had to do something extraordinary to regain the respect of his Family.

"Sometimes you have to do the hard thing to get where you want to go," Carrington said. "It feels good to do the right thing, to have my parents say 'I am so proud of you.'"

Rubio-Aragon said that her grades suffered and she was bullied in school because English is not her first language. She said that the encouragement she received from her mentor gave her the confidence to succeed during the program. "I wanted to show my Family that I am capable of doing anything I set my mind to do," she said.

"In twenty-two weeks I have grown up so much. The little girl who had so

many hopes and dreams is back."

The Maryland Defense Force Band provided the ceremony's music.

### **Top ChalleNGe Academy awards went to the following:**

- Cadet of the Cycle, Cadet Jawon McGill
- Academic Excellence, Cadet Stevonne Craig
- Leadership, Cadet Jonathan Amparo
- Physical Fitness, Cadets Timothy Hurley Jr. and Madelin Rubio-Aragon
- Most Improved, Cadet Tony Walker

### **Scholarship presentations**

■ The Aberdeen Chapter of the Association of the United States Army, \$1,000 awarded to Cadets Alicia Hines and Destin Byas

■ Maryland National Guard Foundation, \$1,000 scholarship awarded to Cadet Nathanael Farmer

■ Towson Rotary Foundation, Inc., \$1,000 scholarship awarded to Cadet Aaron Olivas

■ Nancy H. Sevier Award, \$1,000 scholarship awarded to Cadet Stephanie Fikes

■ Pedro 66 Scholarship, \$1,000 awarded to Cadet Jawon McGill

■ Harford Community College, \$5,000 scholarship awarded to Cadet Seth Carrington

■ DRS Scholarship, 1,000 awarded to Cadet Jonathan Amparo

■ Lockhead Martin Scholarship, \$1,000 awarded to Cadet Dylan Fuller

■ National Guard Youth Foundation Scholarship, \$1,000 awarded to Cadet PabloVivar-Guzman

■ Bo Conway Scholarship, \$1,000 awarded to Cadet Shean Smith

■ Lincoln Technical Institute, \$10,000 scholarships awarded to Cadets William Charney, Howard Jones, Ginie Marciano, Collin Redwine, Jessina Reyes-Gomez, Benjamin Rojas-Hernandez, Madelin Rubio-Aragon, Zachary Sutphin, Patrick Willen, Kevin Argueta, Carlito Thompson, Ronald Stone, Justin Morris and Patrick Duffy.